

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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13

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 CU-04

AID-20 OMB-01 DRC-01 /112 W  
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R 0 )055Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8152

INFO DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 17541

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIS, CO

SUBJ: INSURGENT AMBUSH OF RTA REACTION FORCE

1. AT 1300 HOURS ON 4 NOVEMBER 1973, INSURGENTS AMBUSHED A COMPOSITE REACTION FORCE IN KHAO-WONG SUB-DISTRICT, KALASIN PROVINCE. PRESS REPORTS STATE THAT FORCE WAS REACTING TO A FALSE ALARM INITIATED BY CT IN BAN THAT (UD928566). RTA TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER, BANGKOK REPORTS CASUALTIES OF: 23 RTG KIA (17 RTA, 2 VDC, 4 VSDU) AND 7 WIA (NFIA). ALSO LOST WERE 23 M-16 RIFLES, 1 M-60 MACHINE GUN, 2 M-79 GRENADE LAUNCHERS, 2 PISTOLS, 38 HAND GRENADES AND 2 AN/PRC 25 RADIOS, CT CASUALTIES UNKNOWN.
2. WHILE RTG FORCE HAVE SUFFERED LARGER CASUALTIES IN PAST ACTIONS AGAINST THE INSURGENTS, I.E., "PHU KWANG", THE CT'S IN THIS AMBUSH HAVE TAKEN A HEAVIER RTG TOLL OF LIVES THAN IN ANY OTHER AMBUSH IN THE PAST EIGHT YEARS OF CONFLICT.
3. THIS CLASSIC AMBUSH HAS RECEIVED FRONT PAGE COVERAGE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS FOR TWO DAYS. THE BANGKOK POST IN AN EDITORIAL ON 7 NBDEMBER PLACES THE INSURGENCY TOWARDS THE FORE- FRONT OF PROBLEMS FACING THE NEW GOVERNMENT. THE EDITORIAL IS QUOTED IN PART:

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"THE KALASIN AMBUSH WITH ITS HUGE TOLL OF OFFICIALS' LIVES SHOULD SHOCK US OUT OF OUR EUPHORIA. SINCE THE OCTOBER 14 STUDENT REVOLUTION THERE HAD BEEN AN AIR OF FREEDOM AND A FEELING THAT WE HAD SHAKEN OFF OUR CARES AND BURDENS. ONE OF THE RESULTS WAS A GREATER TOLERANCE OF COMMUNISM, WITH MANY PEOPLE BELIEVING THAT COMMUNISM WAS A BOGEYMAN RAISED BY THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT TO KEEP ITSELF IN POWER. THE AMBUSH SHATTERS THAT FALSE HOPE AND SHOULD WAKE US UP TO CERTAIN REALITIES OF THE SITUATION."

THAI LANGUAGE PRESS LIMITED ITSELF TO STRAIGHT REPORTING UNTIL 8 NOVEMBER WHEN ARTICLES APPEARED IN THE DAILY NEWS AND THAI DAILY CALLING ATTENTION TO THE KALASIN TRAGEDY AND URGING THE PEOPLE NOT TO FORGET ABOUT THE CT.

4. THE KAO WONG AREA, SCENE OF THIS INCIDENT, HAS HAD ITS SHARE OF AMBUSHES AND OTHER INSURGENT ACTIVITIES. IN OCTOBER 1972, 9 RTG PERSONNEL WERE KILLED IN AN AMBUSH IN THE SAME VICINITY. CARELESSNESS ON THE PART OF LOCAL RTG COMMANDER, CONFIRMED BY LTG SAIYUD IN PRESS STATEMENT ON NOVEMBER 5, APPEARS TO BE MAIN CAUSE OF TRAGEDY. THE COMMANDER OVERLOADED TWO VEHICLES WITH REACTION FORCE TROOPS AND TRAVELED A KNOWN CT TARGETED ROAD ON BASIS OF QUESTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION. IT WAS ALSO A SUNDAY AFTERNOON, A DAY AND TIME WHEN ALERTNESS ON THE PART OF RTG SECURITY FORCES APPEARS TO BE AT ITS LOWEST EBB.

5. ON 7 NOVEMBER, THIRTY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND PAID A VISIT TO AMBUSH WOUNDED IN THE MILITARY HOSPITAL IN BANGKOK. THE STUDENTS PRESENTED FRUIT AND FLOWERS TO THE WOUNDED SOLDIERS DURING THE VISIT.  
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NNN

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